

CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

OVERVIEW

The purpose of this study was the development of an Airport Master Plan Update (AMPU) for Groton-New London Airport (GON¹), located in Groton, Connecticut. This update replaces the last AMPU completed in 1999.

An airport master plan is a comprehensive study of an airport which describes the short-, medium-, and long-term development plans to meet future aviation demand. The goal of any master plan is to provide the 20-year framework needed to guide future airport development that will cost-effectively satisfy aviation demand, while considering potential environmental and socioeconomic impacts.

This planning study will consider the possible environmental and socioeconomic costs associated with alternative development concepts, and the possible means of avoiding, minimizing, or mitigating impacts to sensitive resources at the appropriate level of detail for facilities planning. Additionally, more detailed engineering and environmental analysis and documentation may be required in order to implement some of the recommendations of this update.

This update will focus on changes that have occurred since the last AMPU, and how these changes affect the airport's current and future capacity and demand. The report will be a revision, or "update" to both the 1999 Technical Report (master plan) and the Airport Layout Plan (ALP) drawing set, which is a legal requirement for airports that receive Federal assistance. This update includes the following elements:

- Public Involvement, including a series of meetings and presentation
- Environmental Considerations
- Existing Conditions
- Aviation Forecasts
- Facility Requirements
- Alternatives Development and Evaluation
- Airport Layout Plans
- Facilities Implementation Plan
- Financial Feasibility Analysis

Meeting existing and future demand is the ultimate goal of a master plan. That is, does the airport have now and will it have in the future, adequate capacity to meet this demand? The capacity/demand relationship is important because with the exception of safety

¹ GON is the Federal Aviation Administration airport identifier for the Groton-New London Airport. The international identifier is KGON.

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related changes, all capacity changes are demand based; meaning that infrastructure changes, unless they are safety driven, are generally not made until the demand justifies the change.

AMPU OBJECTIVES

A successful airport master plan can be easily comprehended, is acceptable to the many airport stakeholders, addresses community concerns and can be implemented in a series of practical stages to meet realistic financial and schedule constraints. To this end, the objective of this master plan update is to provide achievable goals and guidance for future airport development to the community and GON. Ideally, the goals will meet aviation demand; the community will accept them; they will be environmentally compatible; and they will coordinate with other modes of local, state, and national transportation.

The adoption of the Master Plan will be the momentum for making decisions regarding the following:

- The determination of the best feasible alternative for developing airport facilities that serve current and future airport users.
- The justification and time frame for future runway, taxiway, terminal area and landside improvements. These improvements include upgrading the terminal building, hangars, aircraft parking aprons, vehicular parking, and fueling facilities.
- An economic impact analysis that will compile economic, socio-economic and demographic data to accurately depict the value of the airport to the affected communities.
- The development of runway safety areas to meet the required Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) design standards.
- The determination of instrument approach minimum requirements needed to meet current and projected aviation demand and to maximize aviation safety.
- The prioritization of the improvements as they pertain to the financial capability of GON, Connecticut Airport Authority (CAA), Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT), and the FAA.
- Other recommended development that will contribute to safer and efficient airport operations.
- The determination of physical facility developments as they relate to immediate planning (0-5 years), intermediate (5-10 years) and future planning (10-20 years), and financial costs for these improvements.